

Moore (Levi) March  
Compliments of  
Levi Moore

70 1/2 Hudson St

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

MEDICAL SOCIETY

OF THE

COUNTY OF ALBANY,

NOVEMBER 13th, 1866.

Moore Levi

Bot 10



# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

## MEDICAL SOCIETY

OF THE

COUNTY OF ALBANY,

NOVEMBER 13<sup>TH</sup>, 186~~6~~

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By LEVI MOORE, M. D.,

PRESIDENT.

*Presented by  
Henry March*



ALBANY :

VAN BENTHUYSEN & SONS' STEAM PRINTING HOUSE.

1867.

# THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

Printed by J. Streater, at the Sign of the Gun, in St. Dunstons Church-yard

1704

By Authority

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## ADDRESS.

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There is an old adage, that he who makes two blades of grass to grow where but one grew before, is a public benefactor. In a higher and nobler sense, he is a benefactor to his race, who contributes to the prolongation of human life, and the enlargement of man's capabilities.

The vital importance of public health or hygiene in its various relations to society must be recognized by all. Surrounded as we ever are by the elements of disease and dissolution, our lives brought in hourly jeopardy from pernicious and destructive influences, the food we eat and the air we breathe often freighted with agencies to mar or destroy the harmony of our being, we can assuredly find here a subject second to none in its important bearings on the medical profession.

The tiny infant in its mother's arms, youth with its rose-tinted hopes and gilded visions of the future, stalwart and vigorous manhood, with its broad sphere of usefulness and its highly cultured powers, alike pay the penalty of a violation of the laws of physical health.

The importance of sanitary science and its relations to the public welfare can be illustrated by a few striking facts. Less than one century and a half ago, of one hundred children born in the city of London, seventy-four died before attaining the age of five years. Sanitary improvements and a more careful attention to the laws of health have reduced this mortality to about thirty deaths to every one hundred children born. In the single year, 1665, more than 100,000 people died in the city of London, or one to every ten of its population. Of this fearful mortality, 68,000 were victims of a single disease—the plague—whose development and ravages can be clearly traced to the filthy and putrescent condition of the great metropolis. If we take still another step backward we have the almost incredible statement, that in the year of our Lord, 545, during the severity of the epidemic, 10,000 people died daily of the plague in the city of Constantinople. Later, during the year 1345 and the eight succeeding years, this

fearful scourge made such destructive ravages in the cities of Europe and the Orient, that it is estimated one-half of the then existing population of the globe perished from its terrible fatality.

Nor has the present century been exempt from most destructive epidemic visitations. Asiatic Cholera, the scourge of our own times, has repeatedly visited the most important cities of the globe, and claimed its hecatomb of victims, as a fit offering upon the altar of man's neglect of the most obvious laws of his physical well-being. The cities of the gulf coast and southern Atlantic seaboard of our own land, have, in repeated visits of the yellow fever, received sad reminders of the necessity of the most thorough and persistent sanitary reforms.

Although sanitary science is yet in a very imperfect state; although its beneficent objects have as yet been but very imperfectly accomplished, yet the amount of good it has conferred upon the human race, is incalculable. Look at a few facts: In the city of Geneva in the sixteenth century, one individual in twenty-five died annually; in the eighteenth century, one in thirty-four, and now about one in forty-six. In France, in 1772, the annual mortality was one in twenty-five; in 1845, but one in forty-five. In our sister State of Massachusetts, according to the registration report for the year 1864, but one individual in fifty-one died annually. The mean duration of human life in France, sixty years ago, was  $28\frac{1}{2}$  years; now it is about  $33\frac{6}{10}$  years. In Massachusetts, as indicated by the report above alluded to, it is  $38\frac{1}{2}$  years. Within the last two centuries, life has been prolonged in the city of London at least twenty-five per cent.

That the ancients recognized the close relations between the healing art and the preservation of physical health is abundantly attested. Hygeia, the Greek goddess of health, was the daughter Æsculapius, god of medicine. If prevention is better than cure, if it is better to prevent a conflagration than to save a portion of the charred wreck by pulling it from the burning embers, then we need give our goddess of health a more royal regard, than we can worthily bestow upon the parent deity.

Profane history gives us conclusive proof that the Greeks and Spartans gave great attention to the physical training of the young. Among the latter it is recorded that there existed the barbarous custom of exposing all infants to the inclemency of the seasons, that the feeble might perish, and the State in this manner be relieved of their support. The most celebrated men of Greece, in



letters and in war, were also famous in its national games and athletic sports. That the ancient Egyptians looked well to the physical condition of the people, may be clearly inferred from that care bestowed upon the preservation of the bodies of their dead, which has preserved form and feature, through the crumbling dust of thirty centuries. Nor need we doubt that from this school the great lawgiver of Israel gleaned those wise and salutary provisions for the preservation of health, which we find recorded in the book of Leviticus.

Sanitary science, then, had its origin in the most ancient times, and the most enlightened nations of antiquity did not fail to avail themselves of the benefits which its application secured. But with the decline of Greek and Roman civilization, it received little or no attention during those centuries of moral and intellectual darkness known as the dark ages.

Since the discovery of the art of printing, and the more general diffusion of knowledge, hygienic measures for the mitigation of disease and the preservation of health, have not failed to receive the attention of the Statesman and the Philanthropist. The diffusion of more correct knowledge of the laws of health, a more accurate appreciation of deleterious and noxious agents, together with a careful inquiry into the means of promoting both physical and mental health, cannot be otherwise than productive of great good.

Our physical well being depends upon an infinite variety of causes, many of which are entirely beyond our control, while others are absolutely within our command, and still others, and a very numerous class, may be rendered subservient to our well being, or their destructive tendencies may be nearly or entirely obviated.

While health is one of heaven's choicest gifts to man, and a careful observance of its laws will almost to a certainty secure in a good measure its blessings, yet we are ever surrounded by agencies or influences that threaten to mar the harmony of our being, or break the golden cord that binds us to all things mortal. The noxious gasses which find their way into the atmosphere, improper or unwholesome food, inordinate indulgence in most innocent and healthful pleasures, or unnatural excitement of the passions, may suddenly destroy the healthful poise of our physical system, and inaugurate disease and suffering; or they may more

slowly sap the fountains of life, and insidiously bring both the body and the mind under their blasting influence.

While it has been the pride and glory of the medical profession to investigate the secret mysteries of disease, and to gather from the animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms their hidden treasures of remedial agents, it must be admitted that it has hitherto failed to give that important place in its researches to the prevention of disease, which its great importance deserves. Here is a department of labor for the medical man, promising, if he be faithful, the noblest results. It must be obvious to all, that he who, by the aid of science, can contribute to the prevention of disease and the prolongation of human life, does more for the well being of the race than can be claimed for the most philosophical and successful application of the healing art.

We are daily made painfully familiar with disease and suffering, the results of the vices and ignorance of man. Were we carefully to note the relative proportion in any community who secure to themselves the benefits of hygienic influences, their disparity to the whole population would well excite our astonishment and command our earnest endeavors to mitigate the evil. The dietetic care and physical training of young children has hitherto been greatly neglected, and great numbers have been hastened to early graves from the violation of the most obvious physical laws, or from the deprivation of health-serving influences which a kind providence has most bountifully furnished. Unfortunately the tyrannical law of necessity has everywhere subjected the children of the poor to its relentless thralldom. Pure air, abundant light, suitable quantity of nutritious food, and cleanliness, are in a great degree denied the children of poverty. In the daily duties of our profession we are often made painfully familiar with the malignant types of many diseases which may be clearly traced to dark, damp, illy-ventilated apartments, and insufficient and improper food. The children of the poor, too often, alas! carry in their faces enduring traces of want and privation. We look in vain for the radiant lineaments and laughing eyes, which give childhood one of its chiefest charms. Want and suffering have set their seal upon the youthful brow, and the listless face and vacant eyes speak with more eloquence than words of the deplorable consequences of the neglect or violation of the physical laws of nature, in the training of the young. Nor does the evil end here. The enervated body and blunted intellect becomes an ele-



ment of hereditary transmission, and successive generations are born but to gall and bitterness. Truly, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge."

The great mortality among young children, nearly one-fifth of them dying during the first year, is very significant in this connection. This mortality is much greater among the children of cities than in the country. The food furnished the young in cities is in many cases of the most pernicious character; added to this the want of air, light and cleanliness, and the unhealthy exhalations children are often compelled to breathe, and we find abundant reasons for the contrast. The importance of light as a health-giving agent is not sufficiently recognized. Its absence from the sick room is a matter to which our attention is often called, and it is a duty we owe the public, to inculcate a knowledge of its therapeutic value.

Nor do the children of cities get that out-door exercise, so necessary for the healthy development of their physical systems. Almost as soon as they can walk, in violation of the most obvious laws of health, many are placed at school. Here, too often, the process of cramming is persistently resorted to; and if the unfortunate child has any intellectual vigor above the average, it is made a prodigy, and the brain is taxed at the expense of the body, till an early grave, heralded as a mysterious dispensation of Providence, closes the scene, or till the over-worked brain seeks relief in an atrophied condition of all its powers. Most infant prodigies die young, or their capacity for great accomplishments is lost in an enervated physical stamina. It is clearly the duty of the medical profession to inculcate a knowledge of the importance of repressing premature development of the intellect or the passions. Precocity of every kind is a dangerous condition. The complicated human structure, both in its physical and mental aspect, is so constituted that it can, in consonance with perfect health, bear a large though limited amount of labor, if it be properly adjusted to the several parts of the organism.

The brain, the great organ through which the mind manifests itself, is subject to the universal laws of growth and conformation. Here mental hygiene has its origin. All the agents, exerting a deleterious influence on the bodily health, must in a corresponding degree affect the mind. Want of pure air, light, and wholesome food, give rise to idiocy in its several grades, as well as to scrofula and typhus. We all know the relations of goitre to cre-

tanism, a well known form of idiocy, and we recognize in the former a scrofulous affection. The institution for the education of idiots, under the fostering care of this State, recognizing the intimate connection between mind and body, gives the most careful attention to all matters that tend to promote the best possible state of health among its unfortunate inmates. The effect of this course has become strikingly apparent. All the inmates improve more or less; all become more human, and some are brought to reach the average standard of intellectual attainment. The same principle has been applied to the treatment of the insane, and with like satisfactory results.

Our physical organism so readily adapts itself to surrounding circumstances, that perfect physical health may be preserved under very different auspices. The Esquimaux lives to old age, and enjoys uninterrupted good health, while living on the flesh of a few Arctic animals and whale oil. The Indian Islander, on the contrary, altogether discards meats, and preserves health on his native rice and a few indigenous fruits. So, too, the beef-eating Englishman, and the soup and vegetable eating Frenchman, may each present types of perfect health. We are led from these facts to assume, that if a proper moderation and a reasonable degree of self-denial be practiced, it will be found that very different articles of diet may be properly used in different latitudes and under different circumstances; and further, that the most harmless articles of food, if improperly or excessively used, cannot fail to injuriously affect the health. Physical wrong-doing, whether voluntary or involuntary, reckless or accidental, will be, and of necessity is, attended by a physical penalty. It may be long delayed, vigorous constitutional powers may long parry the stroke, but it will in the end come. Effects must follow causes.

The avoidance of excesses in every shape is essential not only to the physical health of a community, but to its happiness and virtue as well. We cannot always trace the links which unite consequences to their causative agencies. Effects are so slowly induced, so many influences or agencies are controlling or modifying the human body, that it is only by a most careful observation and comparison that general principles can be educed.

The capability of the human organism to accommodate itself to the effect of deleterious agents, is very remarkable. The inebriate, the hashish and the opium eaters, furnish well known examples. The effects of these pernicious habits, we have reason to



believe, are not confined to these unfortunate slaves of appetite, but bear an abundant harvest of evil in successive generations.

We will next notice briefly, municipal or public hygiene, a subject of vital importance, both as it regards the health and morals of a community. It will be readily admitted that the physical degradation of the poor is a prominent cause of the intemperance, moral obliquity and vice, among them. Extreme poverty, neglect of the hygienic conditions necessary to health, and an enervated constitution, induces moral turpitude, and thus prepares the way to vice and crime. It must be apparent to all, that if one-half of the money now expended in supporting the victims of poverty, and in securing just punishment to the vicious, was expended in securing the physical and mental well being of a community, the remaining part would be more than doubly sufficient to defray all the necessary expenses of caring for the unfortunate victims of our social condition.

Government can exercise no more important function than that of carefully looking to the hygienic condition of its subjects. It has been observed that in times of great public calamity and disease—as the plague, the cholera or the yellow fever—vice and crime are always much increased, and the evil passions of human nature run riot in all kinds of vicious and sinful excesses. Nor can the wealthy and the refined escape with impunity when the physical and moral atmosphere is thus tainted. They may surround themselves with all the comforts and refinements of wealth and taste; well ventilated, airy apartments, and capacious grounds, isolation from the poor, and a proper observance of the laws of health, will not shield them from the typhus generated in the lanes and hovels of the city, or from that darker stain, the moral contamination, which is so often the outgrowth of proximity to, and familiarity with the ways of moral degradation. In the same neighborhood the rich and the poor are inseparably linked together. They are alike subject to all the malarious and pestiferous influences of a neglect of a rigid sanitary observance.

It is a gratifying fact, that through the efforts of the medical profession, sanitary science has already secured a high position in the public esteem. That it is deserving the most earnest consideration of the community, may be demonstrated by referring to what it has already accomplished. A few centuries since, and fearful epidemics ravaged large portions of Europe and Asia at uncertain periods. Whole communities were stricken down and perished,



leaving scarcely enough to bury the dead. It is now easy to trace the origin of these epidemics, in the neglect of municipal and personal cleanliness, and the utter disregard of all the laws of health. We have a striking illustration of the connection between municipal hygiene and epidemic disease, in the comparative exemption of the cities of the Atlantic seaboard from epidemic cholera, during the past summer, while some of the western cities suffered to a fearful extent. In the former, quarantine and sanitary measures were rigorously enforced; in the latter, they received little or no attention. With these facts before us, may we not hope, by a still more thorough and efficient system of municipal hygiene, to banish Asiatic cholera and yellow fever entirely from our shores, and greatly to diminish the mortality from all the diseases incident to summer and autumn in our principal cities? It is a gratifying fact, that the average duration of human life in all our large cities has been gradually increasing for the past quarter of century; and it is legitimate to look for still brighter results than any yet attained, if the public will but co-operate with the medical profession in securing such sanitary reforms as may be deemed necessary for the public welfare.

I will not let this opportunity pass without a few words in commendation of the faithful and judicious manner in which the board of health for this city have performed their duties during the past summer. The entire immunity of our city, from a threatened pestilence, sounds the tocsin of their praise, and the unusual healthfulness of the summer and autumn months can be ascribed to nothing less than their efficient and self-sacrificing labors. Nor need we doubt that a liberal outlay of money from year to year, in judicious sanitary improvements, will in saving life, increase our material wealth as a community, and promote our virtue and happiness as a people. To the medical profession is intrusted the duty of carrying forward this great enterprise. Let it not be recreant to its trust, but with patient zeal carry light and knowledge to the abodes of vice and destitution, awakening an earnest inquiry into the means of securing both physical and mental health, that life's rugged pathway may be beset by fewer of the ills and crosses which have blotted so many pages of our earth's history.

These few thoughts have been thrown together in a disjointed manner, hoping that the attention of the medical profession may be more especially called to the great importance of a more per-

fect sanitary police, and a more rigid enforcement of these measures of public hygiene upon which the health and prosperity of a community so much depends.

the whole of the world is in a state of confusion and  
 the only way to save it is by the intervention of  
 the Lord of the Universe.

The Lord of the Universe is the only one who can  
 save the world from the hands of the wicked.

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